



For Immediate Release:
January 31, 2011

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Florida House Speaker Dean Cannon and House Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Rob Schenck Comment on Federal Judge Ruling the Federal Health Care Act Unconstitutional

Tallahassee – Florida House Speaker Dean Cannon (R-Winter Park) issued the following statement regarding Judge Roger Vinson’s ruling on the constitutionality of the federal health care act:

“Today Judge Vinson’s ruling affirmed Florida’s and 25 other states’ position that portions of the federal health care act are unconstitutional and a gross misuse of federal authority.

“The ruling makes it clear that the federal mandate to buy government-defined insurance goes far beyond Congress’ constitutional power to regulate commerce. The federal government should join the states in finding ways to reduce costs and improve access to care, rather than ordering individuals to purchase benefits they may not want.

“The complex set of facts, financial projections, and fundamental assumptions in dispute regarding the impact on state Medicaid programs was a significant obstacle preventing a ruling in favor of the states’ complaint of being coerced to increase spending. Nevertheless, the order acknowledges that, in the face of the enormous spending power of the federal government, states have little choice but to remain a “very junior partner” in the Medicaid program. When unprecedented federal funding is combined with a lack of any reasonable method of withdrawal, the states are left with a Hobson’s choice.

“Fortunately, today’s ruling voided the entire law, including the Medicaid provisions. When Congress revisits this law, it must address this unsustainable Medicaid situation.”

House Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Rob Schenck (R-Spring Hill) added, “The Florida Legislature is tackling comprehensive Medicaid reform to ensure that Florida’s Medicaid patients and taxpayers are getting the best value possible. Congress should do its part and amend federal Medicaid law to establish a fair federal-state partnership that respects the constitutional requirements and fiscal constraints of each government, rather than expands government coverage we already can’t afford.”

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